

permeable material, said web member including a first double-skinned web portion interconnected, directly or indirectly, via a hinge portion at an edge thereof to a second double-skinned web portion; and,

(b) fastening means for fastening remaining edges of said first web portion to said second portion, wherein at least one of said web portions includes a plurality of compartments, each of said compartments containing a water-absorbent granular polymeric material capable of alternately absorbing water and desorbing water upon drying out, said polymeric material having a transition between respective hydrated forms at, or close to, ambient temperature, with said hinge portion being free of said compartments containing said polymeric material and defined by a row of stitches, and said plurality of compartments being separated from one another by stitches, said stitches containing respective skins of said double-skinned textile member.

34. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 33, wherein said first double-skinned web portion and said second double-skinned web portion each comprise a plurality of said compartments.

35. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 33, wherein said first double-skinned

web portion and said second double-skinned web portion are each of a quadrilateral shape.

36. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 33, wherein said fastening means comprises at least one complementary first element comprising a multiplicity of hooks, and at least one complementary second element comprising a multiplicity of loops engageable with said hooks.

37. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 36, wherein said complementary first element and said complementary second element are in the form of a strip of tape.

38. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 33, wherein said first double-skinned web portion and said second double-skinned web portion are arranged to be fastened together by said fastening means, so that one end of one of said web portions extends beyond a free edge of the other of said web portions, so as to form a flap foldable over a marginal portion of said other web portion.

39. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 38, wherein said flap has fastening means on a first face of said web portion for engagement with complementary fastening means on the marginal portion on said other web portion.

40. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 33, wherein said edges are along longitudinally extending edges of respective said first double-skinned web portion and said second double-skinned web portion.

41. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 33, wherein said double-skinned textile web member is made of a textile material comprising a woven fabric.

42. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 41, wherein said woven fabric comprises a polyester/cotton fabric blend.

43. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 33, wherein said polymeric material comprises an acrylic polymer.

44. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 43, wherein said acrylic polymer comprises a cross-linked acrylate polymer.

45. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 43, wherein said acrylic polymer comprises a cross-linked methacrylate polymer.

46. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 33, wherein said plurality of compart-

ments containing said water-absorbent granular polymeric material are formed by sewing an elongate double-skinned web member in sewing lines extending along the length of said web portion.

47. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 46, further comprising a plurality of said sewing lines for dividing said first double-skinned web portion and said second double-skinned web portion lengthwise into a plurality of said compartments.

48. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 47, wherein at least one further sewing line is provided transverse to said lengthwise direction.

49. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 33, wherein said hinge portion connects on edge of said first double-skinned web portion directly to said second double-skinned web portion.

50. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 33, wherein said hinge portion connects on edge of said first double-skinned web portion indirectly to said second double-skinned web portion.

51. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 50, further comprising an intervening panel connecting said hinge portion to said second double-skinned web portion.

21

52. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 51, wherein said pouch forms a substantially closed box.

53. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 52, wherein said second double-skinned web portion provides a closure for a tray constituted by said first double-skinned web portion, said intervening panel and a plurality of edge panels.

54. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 53, wherein said first double-skinned web portion, said second double-skinned web portion, said intervening panel and said plurality of edge panels are formed from a single web.

55. The portable flexible pouch for cooling and storing vials according Claim 50, wherein said pouch forms a substantially closed box.

56. A method for storing medicine, comprising the steps of:

treating a first double-skinned web portion and a second double-skinned web portion of a portable flexible pouch, said pouch comprising:

- (a) a double-skinned textile web member of water permeable material, said web member including a first double-skinned web portion

interconnected, directly or indirectly, via a hinge portion at an edge thereof to a second double-skinned web portion; and,

- al
- (b) fastening means for fastening remaining edges of said first web portion to said second portion,

wherein at least one of said web portions includes a plurality of compartments, each of said compartments containing a water-absorbent granular polymeric material capable of alternately absorbing water and desorbing water upon drying out, said polymeric material having a transition between respective hydrated forms at, or close to, ambient temperature, with said hinge portion being free of said compartments containing said polymeric material and defined by a row of stitches, and said plurality of compartments being separated from one another by stitches, said stitches containing respective skins of said double-skinned textile member, with cold water for causing swelling of said water-absorbent granular polymeric material within said plurality of compartments; and,

disposing said medicine within said pouch while said plurality of compartments contain the swollen water-absorbent granular polymeric material.